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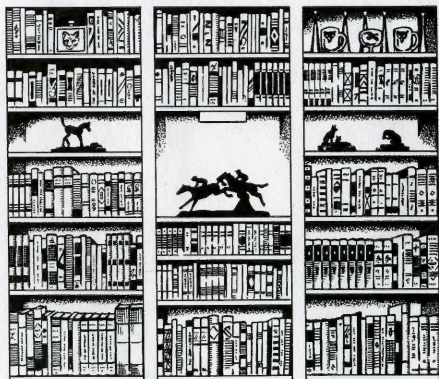
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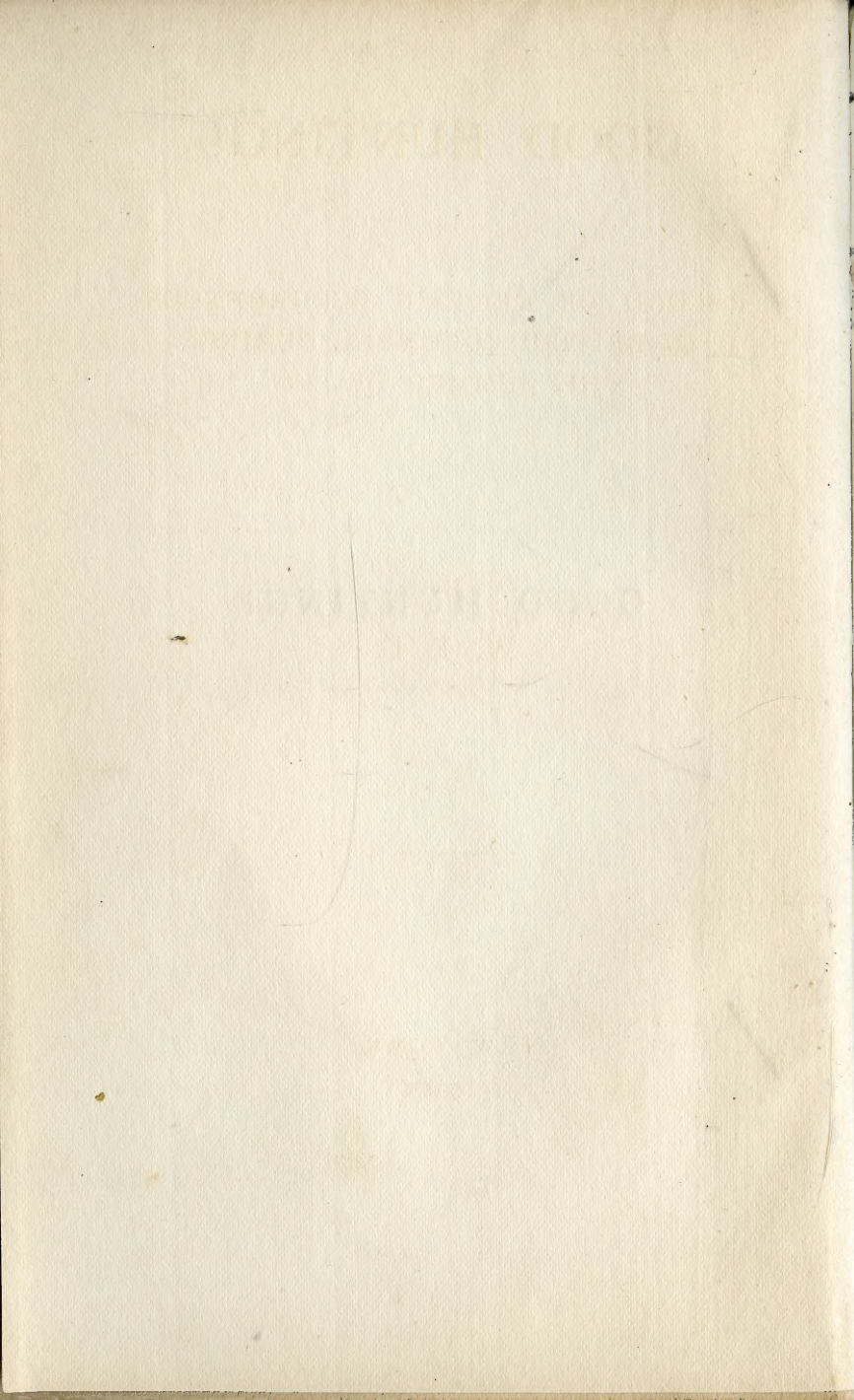
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GOOD HUNTING!

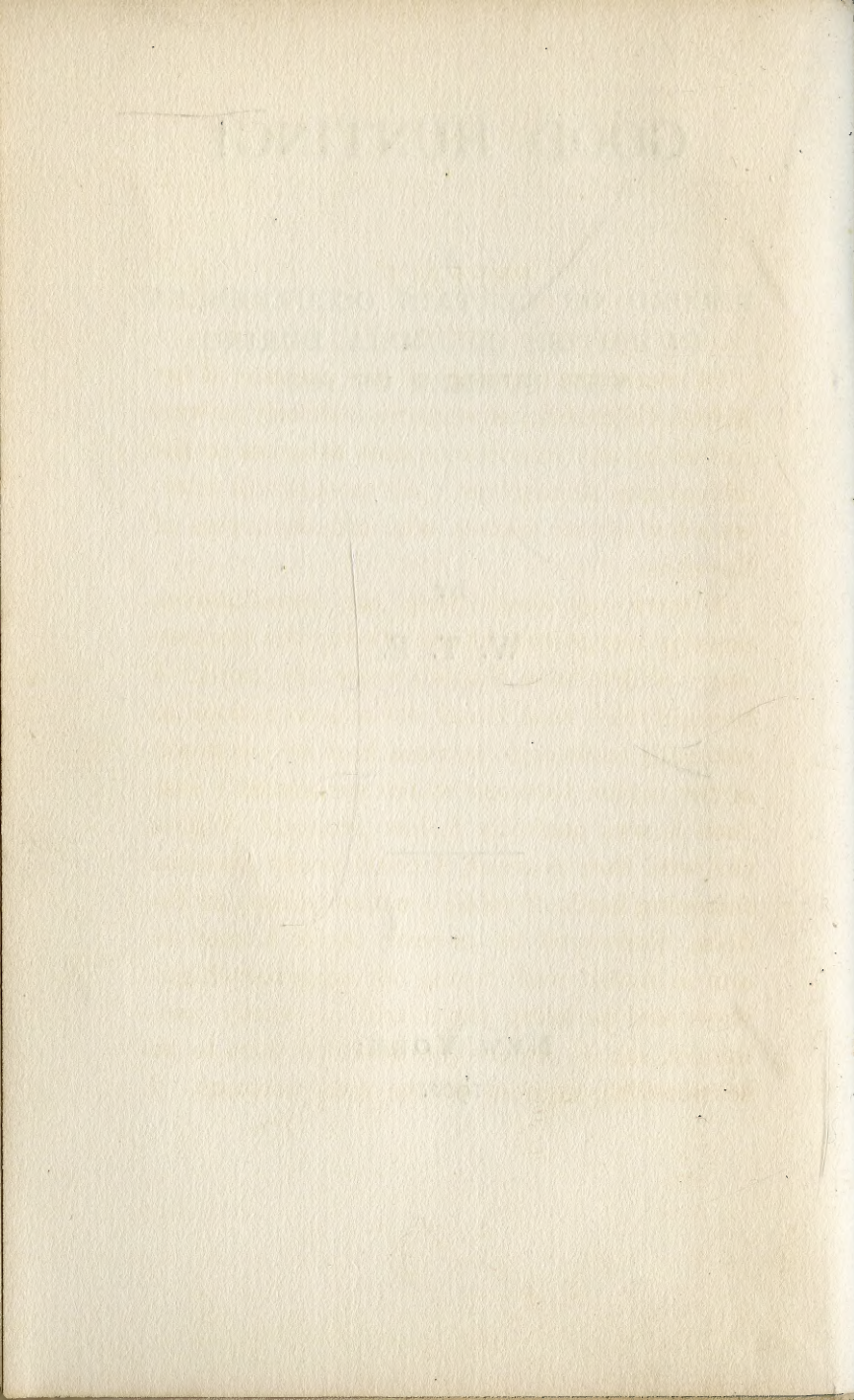


GOOD HUNTING!

A
RECORD OF CERTAIN OCCURRENCES
IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, DURING
THE SUMMER OF 1888.

By
W. T. E.

NEW YORK:
1901.



PREFACE.

Of course the printing of this account of my British Columbian adventures is utterly unwarranted by any importance that attaches to the adventures themselves. At most it will interest a few of my friends who are also lovers of the chase.

I have no doubt that the Similkameen country has greatly altered during the thirteen years which have elapsed since my hunt. I thought then that I had never seen a place so naturally inviting to homeseekers as was much of the region through which we passed. But then it was perfectly fallow ground. Where the wild deer roamed, I could easily imagine fattening herds of cattle ; where parties of Indians journeyed by narrow trails, I used to amuse myself with laying out imaginary highways and peopling them with a sturdy yeomanry, whose homes innumerable were to be scattered throughout all the river bottoms. I

cannot doubt that my forecasts have already in part been realized. I noticed on a recent railway map that a spur of the Canadian Pacific now runs to Okanagon lake, and that an extension through the Similkameen Valley is projected. I fancy under these circumstances there will not now be so many deer to be killed along that river as of yore.

The patient reader of my narrative will correctly surmise, however, that some of the localities we visited must for an indefinite period of time remain practically as they were at the time of our visit. Nature in so rugged a mood as she there assumes cannot be tamed in a day, nor even in thirteen years. I think I could find my way, if I had another opportunity, to certain well-remembered fastnesses in the Ashnola country, where sport a-plenty might be still had :—to all intents and purposes as good sport as we found when we first penetrated the mysteries of these wild glens and woke their echoes with our Winchesters.

For some years after my trip I corresponded in a desultory fashion with Shuttleworth, but it is now at least five years since I have heard

a word of him. In his last letter he spoke of moving farther north, and he gave me sad news concerning his boys. Charlie had but recently died of pneumonia, and as to the wild Harry, whose temperament and habits were incorrigibly those of his Indian mother, the old man's letter said that he had been missing for over a year, and that no one knew whether he was dead or alive, or what had become of him. If poor old Shuttleworth still lives, he must be a very old man, who has taken his last long jaunt through the wilderness.

CHAPTER I.

FROM VICTORIA TO THE POTATO RANCH.

We entered the harbor of Victoria on the evening of the 1st of August, 1888, and there disembarked with several of our Alaskan fellow-passengers. We now proposed to spend a month or six weeks hunting big game in the British Columbian interior. Two plans were before us—one involving the pretty constant use of canoes, upon an interior lake ; the other, a long ride across the Cascade Mountains, and a horseback hunt upon the sheep ranges and through the park-like valleys to the east of this range. Before leaving for Alaska we had dispatched several letters to persons whose names had previously been given us as those of qualified mountain men. Of the replies which met us upon our return, but two attracted us, and between them it was difficult to choose. Finally, that of Shuttleworth,

mailed from a little place on the Fraser River, was given preference, both by the Parson and myself.

The Parson was my old friend. We had met on the Alaskan steamer by appointment, each of us having taken his own way from the eastern to the western seaboard. The Parson, upon his journey through the Yellowstone, had fallen in with three young fellows, Clark, Kemp and McKay, who turned up afterwards upon the Alaskan steamer and were as keen as ourselves upon the subject of a big game hunt before going East again. With perhaps a few misgivings as to the size of the party, we concluded, nevertheless, to ask them to come along with us; and it is pleasant to record that we never once regretted having done so.

Shuttleworth's letter was specific in the matter of instruction and directions about what we should buy for our trip in Victoria, and what we had better leave until we reached our real starting point. It was generous, also, in its promises of game. Having made the purchases suggested by our correspondent, we took the night boat for Vancouver, spent a

morning in that infant terminus of the newly-finished Canadian Pacific Railroad and at mid-day boarded the transcontinental train which set us down, when evening was coming on, at a solitary station on the banks of the Fraser.

Shuttleworth, gray of hair, of gentlemanly manner, bearing the evidences of an English origin in every feature and movement—in his neatly trimmed whiskers, in his pleasantly modulated voice, in a certain jauntiness of carriage and dress suggestive of the quiet English country side—met us on the station platform. With him was a youth who, despite a copper color and straight black Indian hair, clearly had a strain of not uncultured English blood in his veins. This was Shuttleworth's younger son, Charlie. There were also two squat-legged, tangled-haired, fish-eating, Fraser River redskins, who set to, upon a word from the guide, and carried our luggage down the steep bank to canoes which there awaited it and us.

By means of these graceful vessels we crossed the boiling Fraser, which at this point runs at the rate of nine miles an hour and is a very deep and mighty stream. Here is where it has cut

its way through the Cascade Range, and mountain masses of the most impressive kind flanked us on all sides. The water fairly boiled around the frail-seeming dugouts, and we felt insecure enough (and from an entirely novel cause), as we passed under skillful guidance from one eddy to another and at last made a successful dash for shore, striking, just at the right spot, a gravelly beach in front of a row of tiny white men's houses.

There was an atmosphere almost of tradition, certainly of respectability, about this beautiful little settlement. Heavily-laden fruit trees—apples, plums, pears and gages—gave evidence that our starting point was not the growth of yesterday. Its modest but picturesque story, indeed, runs far back into the "Hudson Bay times." And still, albeit somewhat shaken in its supremacy by the newly built railroad so near at hand, the old Canadian John Company dominates this and many similar settlements in the far Northwest. It is at the Hudson Bay store that most of the trading is done and most of the mountain gossip swapped by those who go in or come out by the

trail which here has its terminus upon the fringe of civilization.

We put up at a tiny shanty called the Columbia Hotel, and spent two days waiting for the arrival of Shuttleworth's pony herd and getting the remainder of our outfit together. Finally the herd arrived, twenty-one horses and three colts, whose mothers were to serve in the pack train—in charge of the older Shuttleworth boy, Harry by name. The next morning we were up bright and early, and watched the interesting process of packing our belongings upon the backs of the sturdy little animals among whom we were, for the next month at least, going to depend absolutely for the transportation of ourselves and our possessions through the wilderness.

At last, the ingenious contrivances of racks, ropes and straps, holding in place all that our company would require for a five weeks' sojourn in the mountains, were tightened up, and each man of us, on the pony of his selection, waved a last farewell to the roaring Fraser and the assembled whites and Indians of the neighborhood. There were five Eastern-

ers, one Western white man (Shuttleworth), two half-breeds (Harry and Charlie), and no mean figure we cut as we struck into the woods along the trail—the Trail, it should be written, for there is but one, and as a highway its fame reverberates among the folk who use it.

Interesting folk they are—the users of the Trail—both white and Indian. We saw the several types in the little Fraser River settlement—and enlarged our acquaintance with them to the point of intimacy, after we had ourselves become trail-users, like themselves. I should like to describe them, but will refrain, for this is but an unvarnished story, in which character sketches can have no place. The vein is too rich to be trifled with. So I won't try my hand on John Chance, mountaineer and bad man, nor yet on Ashnola John, Indian by breed, chief by profession—further than to say that in the crowd which “saw us off” were these two worthies; the first named of whom prophesied dire consequences to any expedition led by Shuttleworth, whom he cordially hated; and the last named of whom was

ominously displeased at our invasion of the country in quest of the sheep upon which he and his tribesmen lived. But presently these and the other curious ones were hidden from view, and we rode the rest of the day under the grand old forest trees, with a fine stream of mountain water tumbling alongside the trail all the way. We went but fourteen miles, and then pitched our tents for the night. There was no other available camping ground, where pasture could be found for a pony-herd like ours, unless we should go on for nearly twenty-five miles farther. Mountain lions, upon the crags which rose above and around this our first camping-place, howled us to sleep that night.

The next morning there was a delay in starting, owing to the fact that the pony-herd wandered far during the night and gave Harry and his brother a long chase in the gray of the morning, when they went to bring them in. Once started, we had a hard day's ride of it. After a few miles along the trail, we struck off to the northward over a blazed route which is scarcely ever traveled, but which led, said Shuttleworth, through a splendid valley and

deer country and which some forty miles farther on joined the main trail again. We were rather keen to christen our new rifles before we struck the still-distant sheep ranges; wherefore we struck off as aforesaid, abandoning the regular and vastly easier route through the mountains.

It was a day of tribulation. We forced our ponies through lusty undergrowths and over many fallen trees. One member of the party was left hanging to the branches of a tree, somewhat after the manner of Absalom, while his horse trotted from under him. The route led through rocky brooks and across great beds of snow, lying here in the cool valleys unaffected by the summer sun, and into fine groves of spruce, fir and hemlock. When at last we camped in the most delicious of regions, between two streams of limpid water, surrounded by graceful trees and in sight of the everlasting snow upon abutting heights, we were a tired party of tenderfeet. But we felt that at last we were in the wilderness, and that shortly we would have a crack at the game of the country.

We called this the Canyon Camp, and our stay here lasted a week. It was not marked by any notable feats of prowess in the line of game-killing, but we bagged enough deer to keep eight hungry mouths fed, which was not to be sneezed at. At the time, indeed, we regarded this week as most profitably spent from the standpoint of the pot-hunter. But that was before we knew what British Columbia afforded in the line of hunting grounds. The Ashnola was still ahead of us and unknown, except through Shuttleworth's promises. These, like prudent men, we were disposed to discount.

Where we were now established, at the head of the Canyon through whose untrodden bottoms we had forced pack-train and mounts upon our second day's ride, had once, said Shuttleworth, been the greatest deer country he had ever known. The trail passed not through it, as previously stated, and those who move among the northwestern mountains—even the Indians—stick pretty closely to the trail. But for one or two years past it seems that parties of Okanagons on their way to

trade deer meat for salmon with their Fraser River brethren, had been in the habit of cutting into this canyon to lay in a good stock of material with which to barter. This had resulted, of course, in something of a thinning out of the deer. Nevertheless, the original source of the attraction for game which this particular spot possessed was still potent enough. There lay, it seems, a little patch of salty soil in the bottom of a gully a mile or so from our camp, and the deer, said Shuttleworth, were in the habit of gathering in herds at this place in order to nibble the soil.

The morning after our arrival some of us went to these licks with Shuttleworth, but a cautious and well-executed approach was not rewarded by any sight of game. There were tracks innumerable, however, deep trails by the score leading from every direction to the point of attraction, a wet, stony place at the head of a ravine. It was too late in the day—early morning is the time for “licking” deer—so we drew lots for the privilege of spending the next night at the licks. Clark and McKay were the lucky men, and toward evening they

packed blankets to the spot and settled down under the branches of a neighboring pine tree, to fight mosquitoes and watch for developments.

Later in the afternoon the half-breed Harry and I took a wide detour through the forest, crossing several minor ridge-tops, all heavily timbered, and rummaging through many attractive little valleys. A far-more inspiring form of pursuit is this still-hunting or stalking, than watching for deer coming to the licks. We were shod throughout this British Columbian trip in Indian moccasins; and noiselessly we stepped through the grand forest, with every sense alert, not knowing at what moment we might not spy the coveted game. A peculiar charm attended this silent work in the beautiful, mossy, ferny woods, in the genial sunshine of midsummer; and upon this first day of it we presently put up our deer, a fat doe, and I killed her at a distance of fourteen feet.

Next morning we got reports at an early hour from the lick-hunters. A single rifle shot reached us while we still yawned in our blankets. An hour later, a relief party having

proceeded in the direction of the shot, we came on our friends, Clark and Kemp, still sitting under their pine tree, and in a somewhat unsettled frame of mind. In the gray of the morning, they said, a nice buck had sauntered down to the licks, and McKay had fired at him. The smoke hung so heavily under the pine branches where they lay concealed that by the time it had cleared away nothing was to be seen—the deer had vanished. McKay was not a man given to missing shots like this, and he was confident that the deer lay not far off. They concluded, however, to leave the search for their venison until later, and to look out for some more in the meantime. They were so engaged when we reached them. Shuttleworth said that the chances of any more deer coming down that morning were small, so we sallied forth in search of McKay's buck; immediately found blood splotches, and a moment later the deer itself, sprawling across a log 50 feet off, dead as a door nail.

The Parson and I spent the next night at the licks without success. We voted that we should do no more of it; the mosquitoes were

abroad in force, and we passed a dismal night.

I might write much concerning the long tramps we took during the remainder of our stay in Canyon Camp. Sometimes we brought in game, oftener we didn't—but it was all delightful. On the last day the entire cavalcade ascended on horseback to the snow-fields above us, and a more glorious ride I have never taken. The ascent was wildly picturesque, and near the edge of the snow we found a large colony of marmots—an animal in size between the woodchuck and raccoon, a burrower, but not a rodent, a dweller in colonies, and, we are told, very good eating. I cannot vouch for this, however, venison and grouse being good enough for me in that land of plenty. This was our last day at the Canyon Camp. On our return from the marmot-haunted heights that evening, we got our impedimenta ready for an early start upon what proved to be a very difficult portion of our route. For two days we went through a practically unbroken wilderness. There was an apology for a trail, but constant axe work became necessary after we cleared the real forest on the western slope

of the Cascade Range, and got into the wind-swept stretches of dead timber upon the higher-levels. The so-called trail served more as a thing to steer by than as a thing to travel upon. The Indians who, as I have said, had been in the habit of making a detour through the Canyon in order to bring a supply of freshly killed venison to their Fraser River fellow-traders, had blazed trees, and in places cleared a way through exceptionally difficult places. But that had been the extent of their trail-making.

We learned many things about horses which none of us knew before. Indeed, we lived in a constant state of bewilderment over the progress made by our cumbersome pack-train. It was handled by Harry Shuttleworth with consummate skill. Fallen logs, undergrowth, steep places, stretches of trap-rock—difficulties of every kind were encountered. An Eastern horseman, without local knowledge or experience, would have been stumped in no time if he had attempted to pilot these twenty-odd heavily loaded beasts across the mountains along this unused route. But Harry proved quite equal to the occasion; as, later, he dis-

played a corresponding degree of ability as a finder and killer of game.

About noon on the second day we cleared the timber line. A glorious prospect was about us—Mt. Baker, down in Washington, looming up in the remote distance, while nearer at hand, ridges and ranges and solitary peaks seemed to heave like gigantic waves upon a troubled sea. We were now near the summit of the backbone of the Cascade Range, and for the rest of the day we pushed across an upland plateau much broken into gullies, but devoid of timber. Plenty of snow patches were scattered about—through some of which we rode, reveling in the icy quality of the midsummer air. This was a delightful afternoon after the troubles we had encountered in the timber land below. While crossing a gully we sighted a wolverine upon the opposite side, making away rapidly. Our fusillade didn't stop him, and he was the only one of his tribe we ever saw. We camped late amid a little patch of stunted firs, beside a glorious mountain brook.

The next day we went down the easterly slope of the range, and finally hit the main

trail from which we had departed some days before. After what we had seen of a trailless country, the Trail seemed a thoroughfare indeed, and we were by no means too romantic to rejoice in the evidences of careful road-building which existed even here, in this utterly wild country. And before long we had the best evidence that we were upon a traveled route, in the shape of a large party of Okanagan Indians—men, women and children—moving toward the Fraser. We came upon them, head on, in a rather ticklish place—where the trail was very narrow and skirted along the sheer face of a perpendicular canyon wall. So narrow was the way, indeed, that we did not see how our pack ponies were going to get past the Indian's horses, also loaded with packs, bulging out on either side. But what might have been a difficult business was safely carried through by the invaluable Harry. Shuttleworth's intimacy with the Indians also turned out to be a great convenience, for we were now getting near our hunting ground and wanted to pick up a good hunter, familiar with the country, to act as our stalker-in-chief. We

were finding out by this time that old Shuttleworth was not very strong on the details of a hunt, although as a sort of general overseer and manager he was excellent, and his boys had been employed as packers, not as stalkers. One of the Indians in this party was willing, he told Shuttleworth, to turn back with us, but he would have to consult his wife first. She was a mile or so ahead, getting ready for camping ; he would have to ride on, arrange matters with her, and join us again, next morning early, at a spot, a few miles away, where Shuttleworth told him we would spend the night. We congratulated ourselves on finding a good man so quickly, since Taltahasket was reputed to be a mighty hunter among his people.

But Taltahasket never turned up after all, and next morning, after waiting for an hour or so longer than we cared to, we went ahead without him. Now we were nearing the establishment of the most important man in these parts, Allison by name. He has lived on the banks of the Similkameen for many years, washing gold and trading with the Indians. His influence among the scattered tribesmen of these

parts is supreme. A crowd of them are always to be found in the neighborhood of his ranch, and he acts as a sort of arbiter in all their disputes. Presently we came to a point in the trail from which his ranch house was visible, and at lunch time we galloped up to his front door with something of a flourish, marveling at the change in the character of the country as compared with that through which we had been passing.

For here was practically a prairie. The Similkameen, a broad, shallow, swift-flowing stream, swept past Allison's establishment in a grand curve, and headed south for the United States line. The surrounding country was all quite level and treeless, covered with nutritious bunch grass. Back of us rose the mighty range across which we had just come, and far ahead were other mountain masses, where we hoped to find the sheep; but here, for many miles around, was a patch of country such as we might have expected to find in Wyoming, but scarcely in the heart of the British Columbian mountains.

Allison showed us his gold-washing equip-

ment. He keeps an Indian or two shoveling the gold-bearing sand into the sluices, and, while the quantity of gold he can thus extract is not enormously large, we were informed that it was a source of revenue absolutely to be relied upon; the supply never ran out, and twenty or thirty dollars a day was to be figured upon as a certainty from the plant which this excellent type of pioneer had established on the banks of the Similkameen.

We lunched at Allison's and rode on for several miles in the afternoon, following the river, and only occasionally encountering timber. As we were about to pitch our tents, a party of Indians passed by, and after a parley, Shuttleworth struck a bargain with a half-breed named Charlie Sterling, who thereupon joined us as cook. Until now we had been doing our own cooking—Shuttleworth not condescending to this species of activity, and the packers having too much other work on their hands. Sterling's accession was a relief, for one has to spend a week or so traveling through rough country with a pony herd to realize how tired one feels by evening and how distasteful

any regular employment is after once camp is ready for the night. Simple as our kitchen arrangements were, there was enough detail work about the preparation of an evening meal for eight hungry people to render it about the most irksome piece of business in which I have ever engaged. We had been taking turns at it, in twos, but all of us dreaded it. The employment of Sterling, therefore, was popular—more popular than Sterling himself became, later on.

The following day's ride brought us to what is known in these parts as the "Potato Ranch"—the bucolic name for a little Indian settlement nestled in among the trees. Here the valley narrows again and the wooded mountains come down close to the river banks. And here we were to get our first crack at a species of big game which cannot be found elsewhere upon the American continent than in these Northwestern mountains—the Rocky Mountain Goat.

CHAPTER II.

CAPRA MONTANA.

The suggestion that we might bag a few white goats in the hills above the Potato Ranch proved, it needs scarcely be said, immediately attractive to us. Neither Shuttleworth nor his sons knew anything about goat hunting nor about this particular goat haunt except by hearsay, and they advised that we secure a couple of the Potato Ranch Indians if we wanted to hunt in the neighborhood. It would promote good feeling, said Shuttleworth, and would lead to better results as well.

Before pitching camp that night, we forded the river. It was just as well, we thought, to place the stream between our provisions and the nimble fingers of the Potato Ranchers. We sent Harry over to find a couple of good hunters who would take us to the goat herd, and he presently returned with Chinook Boy and Charlie Allison—the latter a half-breed.

These men knew what they were talking about—had in fact but just come down from the region we wished to visit—and the details of our little sortie were quickly agreed upon. We were to start next morning on foot. Ponies could not negotiate the route on account of its excessive steepness. The Parson decided not to go. The spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak. He was commencing to find that what a British Columbian pony couldn't do, he had better not attempt.

Next morning, therefore, at an early hour, Chinook and Charlie Allison appeared and we crossed the river on horseback with rifles, blankets, a coffee pot, some coffee, and pockets full of camp bread. Reaching the other side, we drove the ponies back with stones and shouts, and started up the mountain side, which at this point commences directly at the river bank. It was truly a heart-breaking climb, lasting until far into the night. During the daytime on the lower slopes the sun beat pitilessly down on us. In the evening, after we had reached a high altitude, the cold was intense. I have seldom felt more exhausted

than I did when, at nearly eleven o'clock, Chinook threw down his blanket by the side of an ice-cold streamlet and announced that here we would spend the night.

Since we were now in the immediate neighborhood of our game, we lit no fire. Our evening meal was of the most frugal character, therefore. Notwithstanding the cold and general cheerlessness, sleep came to us almost immediately.

While it was still dark night Chinook Boy awoke us and bade us make ready for the morning's work. Munching our broken camp bread, we moved off among the stunted pines. It was now possible to see our way in the early morning light. Presently the party separated into two detachments, in accordance with the understanding arrived at the night before, McKay and I going with Chinook in one direction, Kemp and Clark, with Charlie Allison, in another. The plan, as explained by Chinook's grunts and pantomime, was for the two detachments to approach a certain small mountain-meadow, the early morning feeding ground of the goat herd, from opposite directions, so

that the fire of one party would drive the game into the path of the other.

The morning light enabled us now to move swiftly and silently through a stunted forest. We startled two superb blacktail bucks, but of course did not attempt to kill them. Presently Chinook moved more slowly, then beckoned to us to remain where we were for a moment. Down he went, in the meantime, on his stomach, crawled through the shrubbery for a short distance, then wriggled his way back a few yards, and, turning a very contented face toward us, beckoned us to creep up beside him and observe what he had to show us.

And truly the prospect was a cheerful one. We peered over the brow of a little cliff. The spot commanded a perfectly royal view. Far below was the Similkameen valley, the winding thread of river, the grand abutting mountains. We could make out vaguely the camp where doubtless a certain good Parson was already awake and making critical examination of these very heights, wondering whether his goat-hunting friends had yet done any of the doughty deeds they had set forth to perform.

But much nearer at hand was the chief attraction. At the foot of our cliff stretched out amid scattered rocks the mountain-meadow where Chinook had promised to find goat. He had made his promise good. Many wandering shapes, uncouth and sluggish of movement, white as driven snow, were peacefully poking through the meadow, picking up their morning meal.

The distance was manifestly too great to make it wise to open fire from our present position. Nor could we go down the bluff on the top of which we now were, without alarming the goats. Chinook's plan of campaign was clear in his mind. We must make a detour, come down on the mountain meadow through some neighboring timber to the right of us and near the edge of which the goats were now grazing. Thus we hoped to work into easy range under the cover of trees.

We realized, however, that our friends under Charlie Allison's guidance might even now be making their way into an advantageous position, and probably they would not give us many moments of grace after they themselves were

ready to commence operations. Speed was important, therefore; yet, on the other hand, not such speed as would put us out of breath and unsteady of hand and nerve.

We tried, and perfectly successfully, to combine speed with caution. We executed our approach as far as the last fringe of firs in almost fifteen minutes. Then for a moment we rested, saw that our magazines were filled, even listened, as to the sweetest strains of music, to the shifting of trap-rock just beyond the trees, where the goats were evidently moving leisurely from one grass patch to another. We congratulated ourselves that at all events we were in time and in first-rate trim to give a good account of ourselves.

Then Chinook straightened up, and with his finger on his lip motioned forward.

Even as he did so, something happened. A horrid din of Winchesters, belching forth bullets, rang out amid the rocks and trees a few hundred yards away. With sinking hearts and drawn faces we gazed for a moment wildly in each other's eyes. Then Chinook pulled himself together.

“God damn!” he yelled—the first and last English word we heard him utter—and plunged through the timber, we both at his heels, hoping at least to get a flying shot at the game before it had entirely disappeared before that salvo of rifle shots. Envy of our friends’ good fortune in the meantime took possession of us.

But that didn’t last long. Head on, with most determined and ungraceful gait, came a huge white goat directly at us through the timber. He saw us at the moment we saw him and swerved to one side, taking a line which brought him in a moment broadside on about fifty yards from us. Directly behind him came the flying herd. They were thoroughly scared and were moving at a high rate of speed—yet the appearance of the beasts was so quaint and clumsy that we didn’t realize how fast they traveled at the moment. The opportunity was one which could not be improved upon. Our friends’ fusillade had wonderfully played into our hands, nor did we fail to take advantage of it. We fell back into sitting postures on the hillside and let the goats have it straight and hard. Four fell beyond

any fear of their picking themselves up again. Others came down, but scrambled on their legs pretty quickly and moved in the path of the unscathed majority. When our volley was over and we went down to count the dead, there were but four dead goats. Fine, powerful creatures they were; we stood for many minutes silently gazing on the white-haired, humpbacked, black-horned game. We felt that at all events this was a morning's work not soon to be forgotten.

In perhaps an hour we were back at the brookside, where we had spent such a cheerless and supperless night. We toted in with us the hides and heads of our prizes and deeply did we quaff of the black coffee which Chinook brewed, and smoked contented pipes waiting for Charlie Allison's detachments to turn up; which presently they did—laden with three goat heads. We had a shade the best of it, but the honors were evenly enough distributed, after all.

It was still early morning when we were ready for the descent. But with the day ahead of us and nothing but downhill work, we decided

that we might indulge in the luxury of a lazy forenoon. So we got into our blankets and smoked and dozed there by that eerie brookside until nearly twelve o'clock. Then it became time to resume our strenuous life—and laden with the spoils of war we staggered down to the bank of the Similkameen at sunset and lustily shouted for Harry and his horses to carry us and our plunder across the river.

CHAPTER III.

A SHEEP CAMP.

Below the "Potato Ranch" the river valley broadened again and the ride next morning was over what seemed like desert plains. The sun beat down mercilessly. The distant snow on either hand only tantalized us. Immediate conditions were suggestive of Arizona at the least. We were now without our *factotum*, Shuttleworth, who, with the sheep ranges at hand, was engaged in a final effort to employ a good Indian stalker. To this end he had ridden away very early in the morning, while we were still asleep, with the intention of visiting an Indian village twenty miles away and more populous than the Potato Ranch ; and of rejoining us that night or the next morning at Ashnola Pool.

At noontime we reached the entrance to the Ashnola canyon, and on the banks of the wild mountain river at its junction with the Simil-

kameen—the turbulent Ashnola, along which, for some weeks now, we were to hunt and travel—we enjoyed our first cool moment that day. A large party of Indians rode through the grove in which we sat eating our sandwiches, and, unlike most other Indians we had been meeting, seemed surly and indisposed to swap small courtesies. Harry told us why. These people belonged to the subtribe or family who lived in and claimed to exercise rightful control over the particular locality where Shuttleworth had determined that we should do our hunting. Ashnola John was their leading man—we had met him in Hope and at second hand, as retailed by Shuttleworth, had listened to the sundry protests he there had raised against our projected expedition.

As I recall these matters after the lapse of years I am inclined to sympathize with the position which this sturdy native took. Their sheep herds and deer are about all these poor disappearing mountaineers have which they can call their own. Commerce with the whites has been desperately unhealthy for them. They have contracted heretofore unknown dis-

eases. They have become dependent upon the things which the whites have to sell. They have little or no money wherewith to satisfy these newly-acquired tastes. They own their rifles, however, and at their doors still roam the wild game of the country. So long as that is left to them, a measure of independence, and of their traditional greatness, is theirs; for they are all skilled hunters—lovers of the chase for its own sake as well as for the living they can get out of it. And Ashnola John was long-headed enough to foresee what our hunting trip meant. He need not have begrudged the small amount of game which we might kill—and probably didn't; but he was right in thinking that we were but pioneers in this matter; that an eager army of whites were gathering somewhere for future incursions into his domain in quest of the game upon which he and his people depended for their very existence.

But when we met the challenging glances of these Indians among the willows at the entrance of Ashnola canyon, we were of a different opinion. I am afraid that we were then quite ready, in fact, for trouble, if the redskins

were. Harry spent some time in talk with the Ashnola party and reported afterwards that he had referred them to his father who would come through later in the day; and had himself given the most positive assurances that our purpose was not to slay unnecessarily, but that we would confine ourselves to killing only sufficient sheep to keep us in fresh meat for the week or two we intended staying.

Presently the Indians rode off and we resumed our march, turning from the Similkameen valley at right angles and at once plunging into a most glorious region of rocks and precipices and Alpine prospects.

The trail almost immediately commenced to mount, and up we went until the height and the narrowness of the climbing path, and the realization of what a false step by any of our ponies would mean, made us a little dizzy, and disposed, occasionally, to dismount. Indeed it looked more than once as if the sure-footed little beasts had attempted something quite beyond them in the way of mountain work. Nothing that we had yet seen approached this Ashnola canyon for savage wildness and dan-

gerous traveling. Two thousand feet down, the Ashnola River spun through the rocks like a thread of silver, and high above us towered the eternal heights—timberless, bleak, grandly beautiful; and it was up and down across the face of that mighty canyon wall that the Indian hunting trail stretched—and so narrow a trail it was that the stones which our horses' hoofs set rolling, toppled over the edge of it and bounded down hundreds of feet into forests upon the tops of whose highest trees we could look as from a soaring balloon. It was not pleasant to think upon what the consequences of a misstep would be. Yet before the day was over we found that our cayuses were perfectly sure-footed and trustworthy, and the nervousness which I think at first we all felt, even if we didn't own up to it, passed into the indifference with which a veteran Indian stalker rides on these trails.

The last portion of the ride was perhaps the most disquieting; and again we were to learn something new about the strange beasts we were astride of. Having gotten some thousands of feet up in the air, we commenced now

to descend, and the trail pitched down at such an absolutely breakneck angle that for a moment it seemed like tempting Providence to attempt to negotiate it except on foot. But the cayuses were quite equal to it and their method was beautifully simple—they merely squatted on their haunches when they came to the steep places, and, with forefeet extended as brakes, *slid down!*

At length we brought up for the night at the most delightful spot that can be conceived of, down at the very bottom of the canyon beside a lovely pool, on one side of which rose an abrupt wall of rock decorated with pretty mosses and ferns and all overhung by pine trees, giving a delightful seclusion to this place of cool refuge.

The river here is perhaps as wide as the Bronx at Woodlawn. The pool is very deep and full of trout. The Parson took twenty of them in half an hour's fishing after we made camp. Then followed a cheerful evening of discussion and surmise. The next day we were to invade the sheep haunts. We were on tenterhooks of anticipation. Speculation was

rife, also, with regard to Shuttleworth's hunt after a suitable Indian stalker. We counted on being overtaken at this point by the guide—who, we knew, would not hesitate to traverse the Ashnola pass in the moonlight rather than delay us here beyond one night.

And sure enough when we awoke next morning, there was Shuttleworth, and there too was the tangible evidence that his all-day and all-night ride had been successful, in the shape of never-to-be forgotten Terapasket—as jolly an old redskin as ever munched the marrow of a mountain sheep—sixty-five years of age at the least, innocent of a word of English, but gifted with a gentleness of manner, an unfailing good nature, and a thorough knowledge of his business, which soon made him the most generally popular member of our entire party.

The plan was to leave most of our ponies to shift for themselves for a week among the pleasant grass lands along the Ashnola (the attractions of which were safely to be relied upon to keep the beasts in the immediate neighborhood when we should want them again); and also to *caché* nearly all our bag-

gage here. With only a couple of pack ponies we were to ascend the mountain on the north side of the pool, hunt near its summit for several days, then return to the pool, gather up our horses and other belongings, then ascend the other great peak to the north of the pool (where Shuttleworth, who was reserving it until the last, promised the best sport); and after we had done all the tramping and killing we wanted, the time would have come to turn homewards by the same route as we had entered the country by.

The excellent Terapasket commended himself almost immediately to his new friends by bringing us face to face with a sheep herd not twenty minutes from the time of our departure from the pool. Not expecting to see sheep in this valley we were taken by surprise and we acquitted ourselves by no means creditably. The sheep were some fifty yards away when we came upon them—there were about twelve in the band—and as we leaped off our horses the game turned and plunged into a declivity which concealed them for a few precious moments. Then they came into view again,

racing up hill like quarter horses and now nearly three hundred yards distant. Their color approximated wonderfully to that of the bare mountain side over which they were scurrying. We blazed away manfully until the game was clearly out of range and not one of the animals faltered or fell.

This was somewhat discouraging, but we tried to forget it and pushed ahead upon our steep and desperate climb up the mountain. Presently we came to a plateau of five or six miles in length by a mile or so in breadth— a famous sheep range. Sterling, the cook, regaled us with tales which showed us how admirable a place this was later in the year for hunting the wild cattle. Parts of the grand plateau were in the nature of a rich upland meadow, watered in places by springs, and with here and there a grove of pine. The pasture was a thick growth of the most nutritious grass in the world, the “bunch-grass,” which for horses answers perfectly for both hay and oats. Sterling’s stories had to do with a trip up this mountain which he had made the winter before after meat with a party of Indians. In summer time the mighty

herds we had seen there scatter far and wide among the summits of the hills and we sighted not a single hoof during the remainder of the day.

Very attractive was the camp we made, very exhilarating the high pure mountain air, and very wonderful the sunset. We lacked not fresh meat either, for after making camp I went for a short excursion with Harry and shot a fine black-tail doe in a nearby patch of timber. We discussed her briskets that evening as we watched the night shades envelop the sublime view which our camp afforded.

Serious business commenced upon the following morning, when after breakfast we plunged into the timber tract upon the edge of which our camp was situated, intending to cross it to certain other vast stretches of mountain meadow upon its opposite side. A wild and difficult scramble it was through the forest, for the most part dead—full of grouse which hustled noisily away—and of deer, which in the neighborhood of sheep we agreed not to shoot. At length we emerged into the open, and strangely enough came plump upon a band of

the sheep, almost as we broke out of the timber. They stood not upon ceremony but turned and fled. This time we had no horses to dismount from. Only our greenness as sheepshooters was against us. A fusillade which horrified the prudent cartridge-saver, Terapasket, ensued, and between us we bagged three of the seven animals. It took plenty of cartridges to do it and the question as to which of the party was most covered with glory, as the result of it all, remained wholly undetermined. Every one of the dead sheep was found to have been struck several times. And it was all over in a moment. We had met the sheep and three of them, at all events, were ours.

I have several excuses to offer for the fact that McKay and I, notwithstanding that this goodly quantity of fresh meat lay ready for quartering and packing into camp, straightway proceeded to plan for further slaughter. *Imprimis*: we were tenderfeet, and that is a valid excuse under the circumstances. Then, we were dissatisfied with the share of glory which could undisputably be claimed by us individually in the morning's work. Then, there

were no good heads among the three sheep already killed. Therefore we proceeded with Harry to dissociate ourselves from the rest of the party (leaving them to the peaceful task of skinning and cutting up the dead muttons), and started off to beat up some more game. And an exhausting enough day of it we had—without lunch and for the greater part of the time on the open mountain side, unprotected from the sun. Late in the afternoon we sighted a small bunch of sheep at a great distance off and far above us on the bare mountain side. They grazed near the upper end of a thin line of pines which grew along a little burn at an altitude far above the average tree line. Our struggle therefore was to gain this protection from the sheep's sharp eyes. I nearly lost my life in an attempt to do so, for in crossing a gully, the sides of which were covered with shifting trap-rock, I slipped, my rifle flew from my hands, and bounding down the declivity with muzzle pointed upwards, presently discharged itself, sending the ball whizzing past my ear.

This affair was not to end my life nor our

hunt, however. We were still a long way from the sheep and we saw that they had taken no alarm. So we at length gained the timber patch, worked our way up through it to the end near which the sheep grazed unconscious of any danger, and without difficulty bagged three of the four animals—McKay getting two and I one.

This was quite enough meat even for ten hungry men. Harry, the indefatigable, headed for camp and as the sun was setting returned with a pack pony. We, in the meantime, had cut the sheep to pieces and cleaned out the heads, which were fair ones. Piling a bountiful meat supply upon the pony's back, we made camp in the early evening.

What delicious evenings these were, with their groaning dinners of game, their matchless sunsets, their crackling campfires, their long drawn-out sessions about the smouldering embers, and their twice-told tales! Shuttleworth, our worthy chief, figured largely in these long talks. Whether all he told us of himself was true I won't pretend to say. Some of it I am sure was. His family connections in

England he described as among the most exalted. A bishop and a duke had been his sponsors in baptism. He had entered the army as a fashionable London youth, well supplied with money; had fought through the Crimean war, and been publicly decorated and commended for gallantry in the field by one of the allied generals there. He had lost his substance in riotous living afterwards, and finding the old life without plenty of money intolerable, had thrown it all up and joined the Hudson's Bay Company. For twenty-five years or more he had lived in the northern wilderness as an employee of the company; had married an Indian woman; had entirely disconnected himself from his own people. Latterly he had settled down on the Fraser, and, in partnership with his two boys, was going to see if money could not be made in taking parties like ours to the good game fields among the mountains. The year before he had guided an Englishman, Mr. Clive Philips-Wolley. Ours was the second outfit he had been employed by.

Rare old Shuttleworth! Let us examine not too closely into the details of his story. We

will vouch for the fact, at all events, that he was a good deal of what he represented himself to be—an English gentleman. It would have been strange if thirty years of roughing it had not left their mark upon him. But the enduring qualities of the type constantly asserted themselves, and at times it would have tested the powers of a pretty close observer to detect in the well-spoken, properly accoutered old man anything out of tune with the splendid stories he told us of his youth.

CHAPTER IV.

IN THE HEART OF THE GAME COUNTRY.

At length, after a week of alternating leisure and hard work, of good feeding (which was well earned, however), of mild adventure such as every sportsman's camp can duplicate, we left the high-perched camp by the side of the grand mountain pasture, and descended once more to Ashnola Pool. Here we found our horses and baggage. An hour and a half sufficed for rounding up the fattening cayuses and for the repacking and fresh distribution of our formidable stock of staple supplies. Shortly after midday we started upon what proved no easy task—the ascent of the Crater Mountain with our entire pack train. Save, however, that the slope was sharper than that of the opposite mountain, and the pony herd much larger and more difficult to handle than the small number we had taken with us to our first sheep camp, there was nothing particularly

novel about the day's work. A large portion of the route was covered by a series of zigzags. We tacked up against the steep and slippery mountain side like heavily-laden schooners against a headwind, and we made our camping ground while it was still daylight. McKay shot a splendid black-tail from horseback not fifty yards from the site of our campfire, and with the pack ponies standing all about ready for unloading.

We called this the Crater Camp, and here our trip reached its culmination so far as good hunting was concerned. I think ours was the first Eastern party to invade this veritable sportsman's Eden.

Time and space won't permit me to attempt a detailed account of our many adventures during the weeks we remained here. Every day was a red-letter day, made memorable by some notable exploit or event in which one or all of us participated. High and low we hunted—sometimes fetching mighty trails over the snowy summit of the mountain and far down into the fastnesses beyond; sometimes pottering about on foot, much nearer camp, after particularly

fine black-tail bucks; or in the hope (which, among all our hopes, alone remained until the end ungratified) of meeting a bear. Bears a-plenty were about; their marks were everywhere. They frequently frightened our horses at night, but they were as wild as hawks, and never a one did we see.

This was a sheep camp, of course, before anything else; but among my most permanent memories are those having to do with the black-tail deer. Never have I seen anything to approach the deer of this mountain, either in numbers or in size. The bucks carried antlers like elks. To kill deer—all and more than we could possibly want of them—was so very easy that almost our first decision was never to shoot at these tame and splendid creatures when we were after sheep, or unless, by any chance, we actually needed meat. Of course this rule was broken occasionally, but not so often as one would suppose, considering the make-up of our party.

Frequently while riding out of an early morning headed for the sheep grounds, I have counted from horseback as many as thirty deer,

close at hand—some of them so close that I might easily have bagged more than one with a revolver.

Just above the altitude of our camp, the great bare steeps, dotted here and there at first with stunted pines in clumps, stretched at a sharp angle up toward the summit. On these vast expanses of grass-lands I suppose there were thousands—literally thousands—of mountain sheep. Our method of hunting them was simple enough. In the early morning from a point near camp which commanded a sweeping view of many miles of mountain side, we would locate bunch after bunch of sheep, usually at great distances. Harry's sharp eyes were infinitely more valuable for this work than the best spy-glasses. He would at a single glance discern game against the dun-colored hillside thousands of yards away. Often on this preliminary examination we would see three or four herds of sheep, each numbering from fifty to three times that number, scattered over the face of the mountain.

Having learned in a general way what game was stirring, we would separate, and endeavor

to close with one or more of these herds—adopting, to this end, various expedients. Sometimes we combined forces against one particular herd, some of us making a detour so as to get higher on the mountain side than the sheep, without being seen, while others stalked the herd from below. Stalking was much less difficult than one would suppose, on account of the vast number of sheltering gullies, miniature canyons, gulches, knolls, etc., into which the face of the mountain was broken. Very often after the first preliminary survey our party would widely separate and we would spend the day in twos, or perhaps each man for himself, without attempting any concert of action. Seldom, indeed, was there a morning that did not bring with it, as the result of eager scrutiny from our place of vantage, the certainty of sport. Whether there was any game to be had was never the question. How best to get it troubled us much more.

Yet, judging from results, and in view of the remarkable abundance of game, I ought not to say that the problem of keeping our

larder always a little more than full really troubled us much. If it had, we should have proved ourselves sorry huntsmen indeed. What it certainly did was to call into play quite a little ingenuity and tactical skill on several occasions—and even when good luck ran us head on into the game, as was sometimes the case, quick and straight shooting was necessary. Even in that land of plenty, with the game truly abundant and by no means wild, an out-and-out bungler might have starved. I do not think any of us were big game hunters of the very first rank; yet the fact that during our entire stay on Crater Mountain sheep hung in numbers at our camp ready for quartering, shows that at least we were not hopeless duffers. It would have been strange perhaps if we had not learned something of our business by this time.

On Crater Mountain I had one adventure with the wild sheep which I think was sufficiently extraordinary to be mentioned in this random recital. McKay and I went hunting one morning with Harry about the lower slopes. As we reached the brow of a rather

deep declivity—a sort of miniature canyon cut into the mountain side—we saw a number of sheep on the opposite slope, working their way upward through the stunted pine trees there growing. They presented by no means a bad target, but we concluded to let them get to the top and into the open country before opening fire on them, our idea being to follow them across the canyon and to get a good shot at them from the edge of the timber on the opposite slope. The sheep were unconscious of our proximity. We let them pass out of sight over the crest of the slope, then we ran quickly down to the bottom of the gully and up the opposite slope, directly in the path they had taken. We saw nothing of them when we reached the crest, however. It was apparent that they had passed on into some immediately adjacent declivity. We had no reason to think they had seen or winded us, and assumed, therefore, that they were still in our immediate neighborhood. We therefore went on into the open, thinking to come face to face with them presently behind some near-by knoll, when we heard pounding of hoofs to one

side, and spied the whole band in full retreat; running out of one of these countless gullies, and up the mountain side, like quarter horses.

They were then perhaps three hundred yards distant. I threw up my hind sight, set it at four hundred yards at a venture, and let drive straight into the closely packed, dust-enveloped herd. The effect of my shot was startling. The bullet (which, of course, overshot the mark) kicked up a little cloud of dirt directly in the faces of the leaders of the herd, and instantaneously, like a well-drilled cavalry troop, the sheep wheeled in their tracks and came streaming down hill again, headed directly for us. They were, apparently, vastly more alarmed at the tiny cloud of dust which my stray shot had made than at three men, standing in plain sight, with rifles in their hands. It was an extraordinary case of panic. The seventy or so scared creatures came on us with the speed of a railway train, and, as it suddenly occurred to us, with the destructive powers of one, as well. When they were fifty feet distant, and showed no signs of altering their course, I realized that to be struck by that living battering ram

would be an experience the least desirable, considering the remoteness of all hospital accommodations, surgeons, and the like. It was the most unexpected danger I ever faced—so unexpected that we took no steps to stave it off until it was almost too late. The three of us simply stood there open mouthed, with our rifles in our hands, and stared at the jostling herd until we could, indeed, “see the whites of their eyes” and hear their hoarse breathing. Then we opened on them, emptying our repeaters. Our fusillade only just accomplished its purpose. The sheep were so completely beside themselves with terror, and their momentum was so great, that the only effect of our volley was to cause them to swerve the least bit to one side, and, while we still poured hot shot into them, they passed us, the nearest of them actually so close that I punched the heaving sides of him with the butt of my now empty rifle as he went by. I shall never forget the scene. I was told shortly after our return east by Dr. Rainsford that he had had a similar experience, but I fancy that not many authentic cases of mountain sheep so com-

pletely turning the tables on their pursuers—of actually placing a party of men in extreme peril of life and limb—are known to sportsmen. How many of this unfortunate sheep herd afterwards died from the effects of our shots we, of course, never knew. Only three actually fell; and the slope being steep and their headway tremendous, these stricken ones went rolling and somersaulting along with their untouched comrades for some distance down hill before they were distanced and left struggling on their final resting place—the dry, bare mountain side.

On Crater Mountain we saw wolves, and one lynx was wounded, but not bagged, by the Parson. The wolves—and foxes in abundance—slunk through the forests below our camp; the Parson brought his lynx story down with him from the summit, where he and Terapasket had been spending a silent but appreciative day together. These seniors saw much in each other to admire, and they became fast friends. Conversation was, of course, prohibited by the fact that neither spoke the other's language. They were none the less intimate on that ac-

count, however. One day when they were off together, the Parson, after his noonday sandwich, went sound asleep under a pine tree. Terapasket sat smoking beside him. A fine buck strolled up. The temptation was too strong for the old venison hunter. He took the Parson's rifle and laid the buck dead in his tracks. The shot didn't awaken the Parson, who finished his nap half an hour later and demanded to be escorted home. Terapasket slyly steered him, after they had mounted their ponies, alongside the dead buck—a magnificent specimen. Clearly the deer was freshly killed. How, when and by whom had the deed been done? Terapasket gleefully explained it all in pantomime, and the head of that buck, benignly looking down from the Parson's library wall, is, to those who remember Terapasket's graphic account of his exploit at the camp-fire that night, not the least interesting of the surviving trophies of our hunt.

McKay and I saw the finest heads of the entire trip one evening while we were returning home through the lower forests, and we lost them through inexcusably bad marksmanship.

Crossing a tiny little patch of green pasture in the midst of the darkening forest, we spied six magnificent old rams quietly grazing among the trees fifty yards away. They hadn't seen us, and we sank to earth noiselessly and cocked our rifles. I never saw such splendid horns. They were infinitely better than any we had secured. Everything was propitious for our getting at least two of these superb trophies. We each picked out our sheep, took careful aim as we lay on our stomachs, with our elbows resting on the grass, and pulled the triggers with a feeling of absolute confidence that the horns were ours. But they weren't. Why, I do not know. All six sheep went off with a bound and were immediately safe among the trees. We searched for half an hour, until it became too dark to delay our return to camp any longer, and found not the slightest evidence that either of our bullets had reached the mark.

After we had spent ten glorious days in Crater Camp, it came time to think of going home. The question was, which way should we go? Back over the old trail, past the Potato Ranch and Allison's, or by the more ad-

venturous and uncertain route suggested by the Parson—through the upper valley of the Ashnola and then across country to a river called the Pusaytin, which Shuttleworth had been telling us about, and thence on to the railroad by any route which we found practicable. This plan of the Parson's would involve a great deal of rough traveling, for the region was unknown both to Shuttleworth and Terapasket, except by hearsay, and there was, so far as they knew, nothing in the shape of a trail which we could follow.

In the midst of our discussion on the subject a solitary Indian hunter, an old friend of Terapasket, paid us a visit, and what he told us led us to adopt the Parson's suggestion that we take a new route home. He was himself fresh from the Pusaytin country, where he had been on a lone deer hunt, and was now headed for the Okanagon villages far to the eastward of us. He told Shuttleworth and Terapasket all he knew of the route, which he described as practicable, and at the end of his afternoon's call our guides expressed unbounded confidence in their ability to pilot us out of the mountains

safely by way of the Pusaytin, albeit neither of them had any personal knowledge of the district through which we would have to travel.

Our last afternoon at Crater Camp was spent in arranging our packs for the rough route through which we knew we would have to go—a route the first few days of which would be spent among the rocks along the bottom of the upper canyon of the Ashnola and which after that would lead us amid pathless forests and across many of those broken ranges which in the far distance we could see from our elevated camp. A glorious panorama it was that stretched to the west of us and the thought of plunging into that wilderness of mountain, river and forest seemed attractive enough. We were all youngsters and not easily stumped by physical hardships—all except the Parson, who was old enough to have vetoed, with a good grace, this somewhat venturesome journey home, if he had chosen. But not he! On the contrary, he was the suggester of it. In spirit, nerve and eagerness after the real thing and the new thing in wilderness work, he was—shame upon our young heads!—younger than any of us.

CHAPTER V.

INTO THE WILDERNESS AND OUT.

We made an early start from our happy hunting grounds and at noon were at Ashnola Pool once more. Here we met a party of men who had been six weeks in the mountains, partly in search of game, but principally in search of gold, I gathered. One of the party was from New York; the others, western Americans. They had come up from some station on the Northern Pacific, in Idaho, and were uncommunicative as to their discoveries in the matter of precious metal. They marveled, though, at our showing of deer and sheep heads, for their own luck had apparently been of the worst. A stray deer, now and then, was all they had been able to pick up. Shuttleworth very justly took credit to himself for our own success as compared with the slender bag of these so strangely met countrymen of ours. Splendid a game country as this portion of

British Columbia unquestionably is, I think it quite possible that a party of Easterners might cross and recross it at a dozen different points and entirely miss the wonderful evidences of the abundance of wild game which we could testify to. It was simply a question of going to precisely the right spot, and poorly as old Shuttleworth panned out as a stalker and rifle shot, he unquestionably did know the habits of the British Columbian game and the places where it most did love to congregate.

After parting with our hunting and mining friends, we continued up the Ashnola valley for the remainder of the day, and camped amid splendid pines in a place where the valley somewhat widened out, greatly to the advantage of the going. At this camp we parted company with our half-breed cook, Charlie Sterling. This worthy of late had been rather disgruntled, we knew not about what, nor do I think he knew himself, and here at about half-past six in the evening, his pent-up animosity against the entire party exploded upon his being asked to cook a mess of trout which the Parson was whipping out of the stream hard by. He

denounced Shuttleworth, and several of the party, in the most unchristian terms, and ended by demanding his pay. We told him he would have to come to Hope for that: we packed no pocketbooks through the mountains. He announced his intention of leaving us forthwith and showed he meant business by saddling his pony and gathering together his slender possessions. While I think such flagrant misconduct and breach of faith and contract as he was guilty of, in thus leaving us in the lurch without rhyme or reason, would have justified our withholding all pay, we told him that we would leave with the Hudson Bay storekeeper, at our Fraser River starting place, the per diem amount he claimed up to date; and he, without a word of farewell or of thanks, rode into the darkening forest. It struck us Easterners that he was at least in for a pretty uncomfortable night of it, which, under the circumstances, did not distress us greatly.

I must briefly pass over the next few days. Two of them were spent in the Ashnola valley, the third in mounting the range from whose snow fields the Ashnola proceeds, and

on the summit of which, in a wildly beautiful region of mountain meadow, snow drift and scattered pine clumps, we spent the night. Here we saw our last sheep, riding unexpectedly into a grazing bunch of them just before pitching tents for the night. We delivered an unsuccessful volley from horseback.

The two succeeding days were without any doubt the most laborious I ever spent. It was one prolonged battle with the difficulties of the way. We spent much of the time on foot, doing axe work amid labyrinths of fallen timber. The question of finding water at night was a troublesome one also. One night we pitched ahead through inky darkness, down a wind-swept mountain side amid fallen timber, until nearly eleven o'clock, before reaching the tiny rivulet which we rightly guessed we should find in the valley, and which our poor pack ponies absolutely needed, to say nothing of ourselves.

The fifth night, after a day of adventure, we reached the Pusaytin River at its junction with the south fork of the Similkameen. It was a neighborhood of exceeding wildness—a solitude

which apparently had never before been invaded by man. Shuttleworth only guessed at where we were. His uncertainty and doubt as to what the next move should be was so apparent that we spent an anxious and argumentative night of it. Our staple food was running low, and we had no assurance how much longer we would stumble along at this rate before striking the trail from the Fraser to Allison's, which was now Shuttleworth's objective. It was seriously debated whether we should not retrace our steps to the Ashnola (a week's journey, but one which now we knew the worst about), and thence out through the Similkameen Valley to Allison's. But this seemed too much of a back-down, and we voted to go ahead and take chances.

It was well we did so. Next day we headed north across a not very difficult ridge, and at about three in the afternoon were cheered by a most jubilant shout from Harry who was ahead path-finding. Riding up we found this most excellent of guides in conversation with two of the toughest looking white men I have ever seen. Standing near at hand was a weary

pack pony loaded down with a weight the like of which I never saw upon a pony's back. The men were on foot, carrying rifles. It didn't take long for us to learn that they were prospectors; that they had been in the mountains for nearly six months and expected to spend the winter there also; that they had left the Hope trail three days before and had blazed a way in to where we now were; and that they wanted some tobacco in the worst kind of way. Fortunately, we were in a position to let them have some, and we parted from these veritable pioneers with a great weight off our minds. We knew where we were and the way to civilization and plenty was clearly marked out for us by the blazed tree trunks along the miners' route.

Two days' riding brought us to the main trail at a point about forty miles distant from Hope. We pitched our last camp at the head of the great Skajit Canyon, near a large camp of traveling Indians. Terapasket—genial old Lothario!—spent a festive evening with some squaw friends of his, and didn't return to camp until all hours!

The chief of these Indians (who were engaged upon their fall hunt) was a splendid specimen of wild man named Canoe. He was encamped down in the canyon some miles below where we spent our last night in the mountains. Next morning Shuttleworth and we Easterners broke camp early, leaving the pack train with Harry, Charlie and Terapasket to take two days in covering the distance which we intended to cover in one. We bowled along the well-beaten trail down through the glorious Skajit canyon and presently pulled up at the camp of Canoe. The chief met us cordially and pressed rude hospitality—berries and smoked venison—upon us. He and his merry men were evidently doing deadly work among the deer. Countless hoofs and horns lay scattered about and the work of smoking the meat (upon which they would chiefly subsist during the coming winter) was going on. Canoe's old Hudson Bay musket leaned against a neighboring tree. A quarter of a mile up on the adjoining canyon wall, his wife was picking berries.

Canoe greedily eyed our splendid 45-90 Winchester. McKay handed his to him to exam-

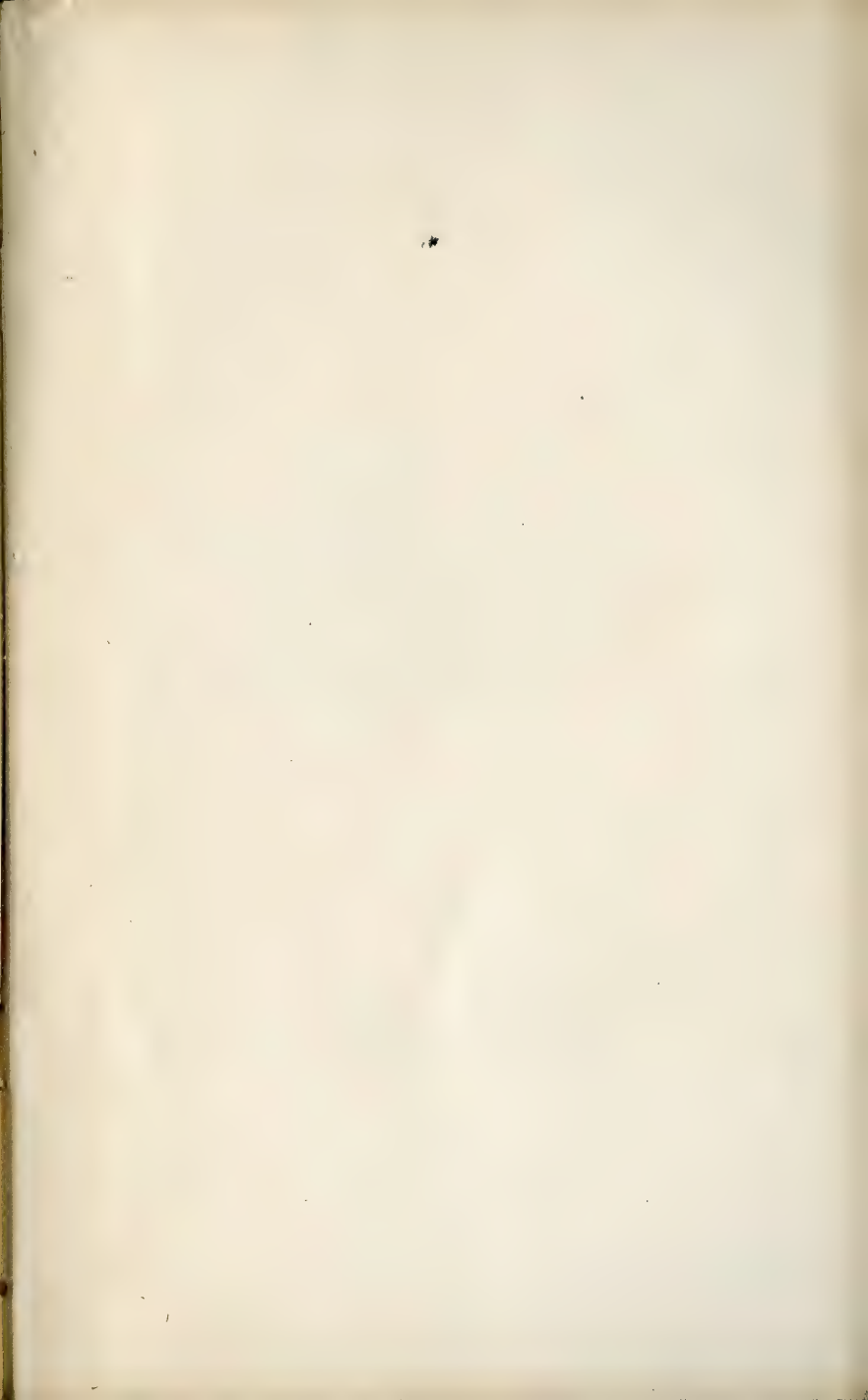
ine and he pounced upon it as a hungry dog would pounce upon a bone. He was the most demonstrative redskin I have ever seen. An idea presently seemed to strike him. He spluttered out something to Shuttleworth which was promptly interpreted to McKay as a proposal to buy the rifle. McKay having bought it only for the purposes of this trip, and having others at home, said he would sell it for what he paid for it—\$20. Canoe, on being informed of this, wavered for a short time on the brink of what he doubtless felt was an extravagance, but the temptation was too strong for him and the bargain was made. But when he came to look for his money, and after completely overturning the miscellaneous contents of his tent in his search, he suddenly remembered that his wife had all his slender store of currency in her keeping. Doubtless it was on her person, and there she was picking berries a quarter of a mile up in the air. We had a long ride ahead of us and Shuttleworth, who was anxious to be off, put a limit on the number of minutes we could wait while Canoe went after his wealth. The impulsive fellow was bound

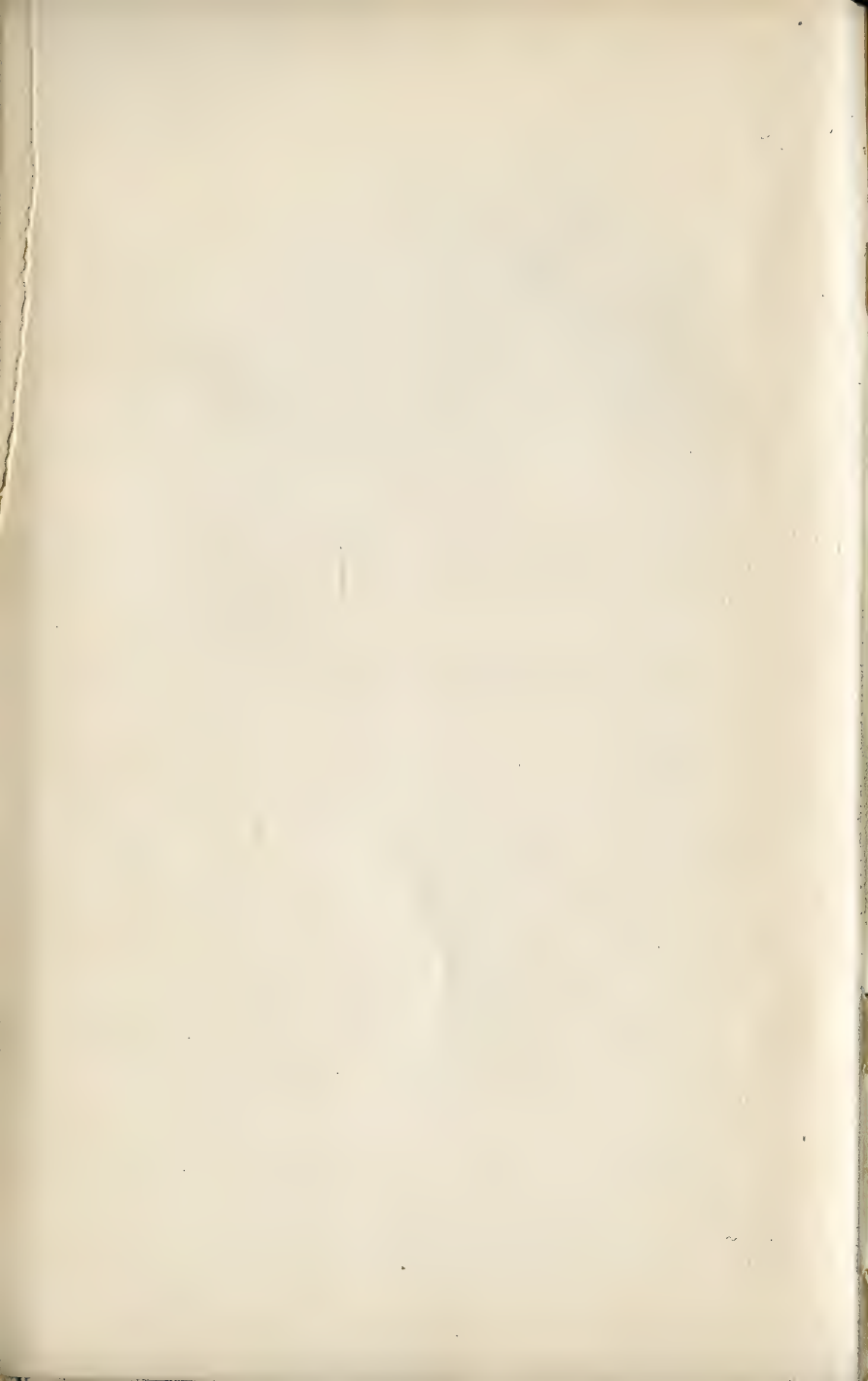
to own McKay's rifle, however, and with a yell of excitement he leaped on the bare back of an unbridled pony, seized the astounded beast by the mane and plunged down the embankment into the river. We heard him splashing across, and in a moment he emerged on the other side dripping, and driving his mount with shouts and blows up the steep incline toward his better half and treasurer. We watched the ascent with great interest; it was really a wonderful piece of rough riding. We watched, too, the aerial pantomime between husband and wife which ended in the surrender of the money, and in a jiffy Canoe was with us again, puffing but proud, with the twenty silver dollars which he placed in McKay's hands. We were immensely taken with this impulsive hot-blooded savage, and we emptied our cartridge belts into his blanket and presented him with every bit of ammunition we could find. We explained to him fully, through Shuttleworth, the mechanism of the rifle, and after hearty handshakes, left Canoe, the finest type of northern Indian I ever saw, gloating over his new possession.

The Canadian Pacific Railway was ahead of

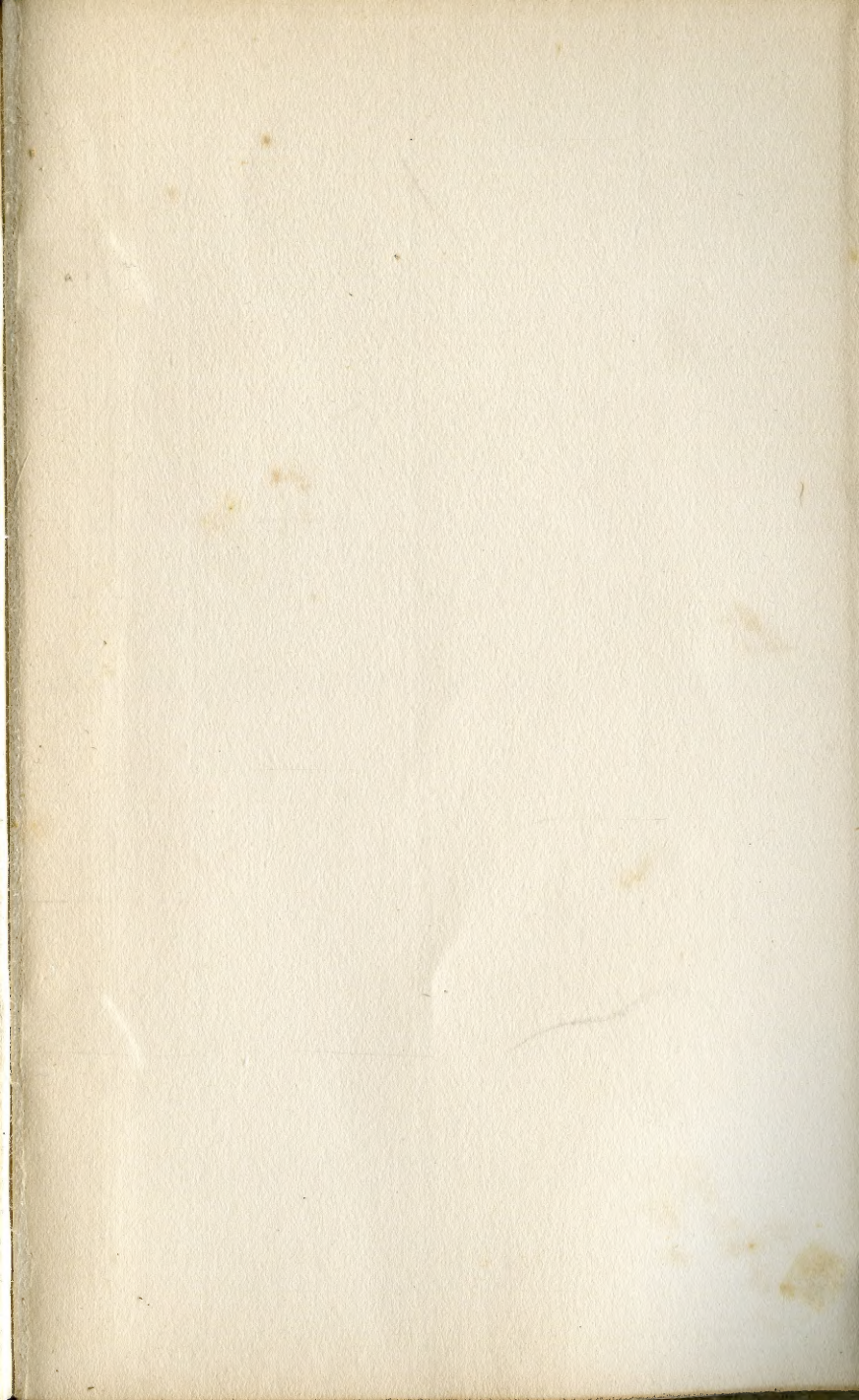
us, thirty miles away—a hard but not impossible afternoon's ride along that mountain thoroughfare. We rolled off the miles rapidly and in high spirits. Nevertheless, as we neared civilization and well-cooked food and good clothes, we cast more than one regretful glance towards the vanishing glories of those splendid mountains, which we had learned to love so well that the moment of parting, when it came, came hard.

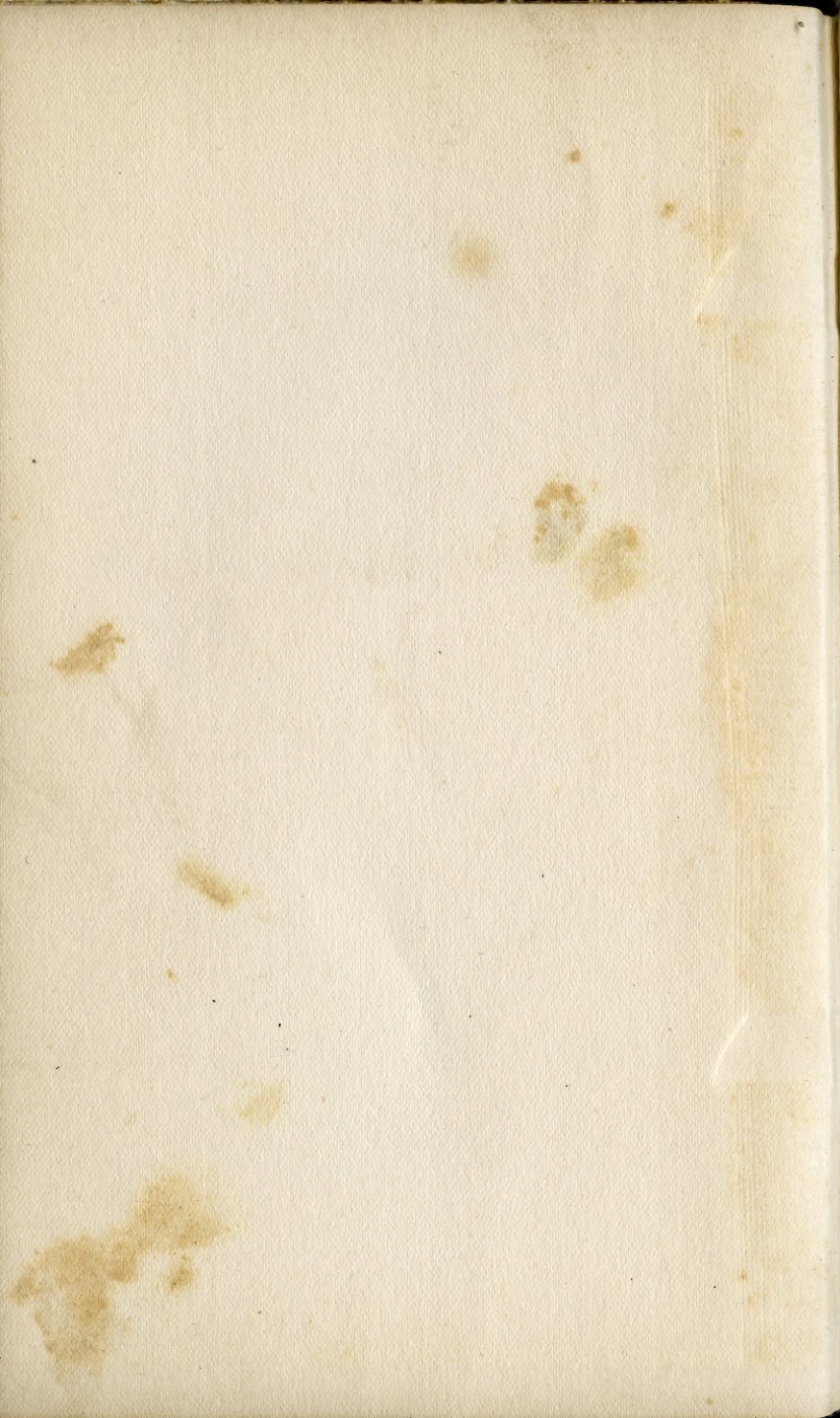












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